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MARXIST HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION: FROM COLONIAL TO NEOCOLONIAL SCHOOLING IN THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT This essay draws on Marx's scholarly contributions to historiography to examine the *history of* and approach *to* the history of education in the United States. The primary theoretical perspective is drawn from the materialist approach outlined in *The German Ideology* (Marx & Engels, 1846/1996). The Marxist historiography in the history of education developed here is then employed to analyze and critique narratives of the colonial and common school eras. This work disrupts Eurocentric tendencies in Marxist history of education by returning to the work of Marx himself.

Este ensayo utiliza las contribuciones eruditas de Marx a la historiografía para examinar la historia y el enfoque de la educación en los Estados Unidos. El enfoque principal teórico esta basado en el materialismo delineado en The German Ideology (Marx & Engels, 1846/1996). La historiografía Marxista en la historia de la educación es utilizada en este ensayo para analizar y criticar las narrativas educativas de épocas coloniales. Este ensayo interrumpe las tendencias eurocéntricas en la historia de la educación Marxista a través de la revisión del trabajo de Marx.

Keywords: Capital, historiography, Materialism, labour, revolution, education, schooling

Introduction

This essay draws on Marx's scholarly contributions to historiography to examine the *history of* and approach *to* the history of education in the United States. Before delving into a Marxist historiography, however, we review the developments within the history of education beginning with Michael Katz

(1975; 1987) and Bowles and Gintis (1976) focusing exclusively on the U.S., even though the goal of a Marxist pedagogy is global in nature. For example, Katz (1975) approached the history of education in the U.S. from the tradition of historiography, which focuses on the theories, methods, and at its most relevant, the political economy of doing historical research. Many trace this method back to Marx himself. We argue that Katz's central questions behind his historiography seem to be grounded in a materialist approach not entirely unrelated to that found in Marx, such as, "what drives the politics of educational history?" (Katz, 1987, p. 1) While Katz (1975, 1987) did not identify his work overtly with Marx, he did situate it as belonging to the same general trajectory as the work of Bowles and Gintis (1976).

What is more, one of Katz's (1975) central critiques is that traditional history of U.S. education texts tend to advance the idea that the U.S. is a meritocracy and social class therefore plays no role in the purpose or outcomes of education, despite mountains of evidence to the contrary (Kozol, 2012). Katz (1975; 1987), however, argues that class is not only a central determinant of capitalist schooling, but it is much more than a *thing* or a group of categories, differentiating consumption levels and patterns, but rather, is a divisive, always-in-process *social relation* between the dispossessed, the excluded, and the laborers (i.e. those who rely on a wage of some sort to survive, including teachers, inmates, and all oppressed nations) and capital (i.e. those whose wealth comes from the labor and land of others, either directly as in industrialists and imperialist colonizers or indirectly as in investment bankers). As argued below, Katz' (1975) class analysis here is undeniably influenced by education scholars who identify as Marxist (Cole, 2007; Darder, 2014; Malott & Ford, 2015; McLaren, 2004). This essay therefore follows Katz on two inter-related lines of reasoning: his focus on social class (i.e. capitalism) and his historiography—inter-related because historiography itself suggests critique, which, in the case of the history of education, has led a number of educational historians to not only social class since social class predates bourgeois society, but to capitalism, or the uniquely capitalist process of expanding value itself. At the same time, however, the bulk of Katz's work focuses mainly on the ideological aspects of how the poor are themselves blamed for their poverty (Ryan, 1976)

rather than the more Marxist critique of political economy, which is central to our understanding of capitalism and the process of historical change and development. Furthermore, we contend that, unlike Marx, the Marxist and class analysts of the history of U.S. education of the 1970s seemed to have failed to fully grasp the importance of racialization, colonialism, imperialism, and the global class war in the histories of education they constructed. This conclusion is based on the observation that in constructing the larger social, political, and economic context in which capitalist schooling is unavoidably situated, the radical revisionists (as Katz, 1987, referred to them and himself) scarcely mention slavery or the conquest and genocide of American Indians and the American continents, and they also tend to distance themselves from actually existing socialist countries while oddly supporting the idea of socialism in the abstract.

One of the benefits of historiography is that it demands such critiques because it brings the method of inquiry to the surface by interrogating the historically-contextualized theoretical and political influences behind the construction of history of education texts. Attempting to capture this process, Thomas Holt (1992), in a short manuscript on *doing* history, argues that histories are narratives constructed through various philosophical frameworks. Following this approach, Katz (1975) argued that traditional history of education texts tend to be written from bourgeois theoretical frameworks as apologies for capital since they deny the existence of systematic or institutional colonization, exploitation and oppression, that is, of social class as either a socially-reproduced category, or an antagonistically-related social relation between labor and capital.

We provide a broad view of the historical development of education in capitalist society through the lens of how the *telling* of that story has changed over time and through the construction of a Marxist historiography for the history of education drawing primarily on *The German Ideology* (Marx and Engels, 1846/1996) and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Marx, 1852/1972).

The debate and struggle over the narrative of the history of education in the United States never exists in a vacuum, unaffected by the larger society in which it is situated. For example, because textbook companies in the U.S. are

capitalist enterprises driven by the desire to create capital (i.e. self-expand), they gravitate toward narratives perceived to be popular, and in today's hyper bourgeois U.S. society where even the left has largely abandoned Marx and the notion of a global class war (i.e. capitalist countries against both socialist countries and workers and the colonized in their own countries), the prospects of major textbook companies adopting Marxist titles appears to be slim. Successful professors in the U.S. therefore tend to be professors that reproduce the dominant ideology—the ideology of the ruling class—not because of a conspiracy, but because it has become common sense. That is, the idea that communism equals a static, authoritarian inevitability is largely taken for granted even in critical pedagogy. While Marxist perspectives are far less common, interest in Marx's vast body of work is experiencing a global rejuvenation as the bigotry and fog of anti-communism slowly dissipates. This essay hopes to contribute to this resurgence.

However, highlighting the importance of historical contextualization, the Marxist approaches to the history of education, represented by Katz (1975; 1987) and Bowles and Gintis (1976), emerged during the height of the global communist movement and national liberation struggles against colonialism that manifested itself in the U.S. with the American Indian Movement, which was a response to the era of Termination (i.e. the U.S. government terminating the official status of many federally recognized tribes) and Urban relocation (i.e. moving American Indians from reservations to urban areas) and the Civil Rights Movement (i.e. the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), which developed into the more revolutionary Black Panther Party. Again, this is another reason why it is unfortunate that Marxist educational historians seemed to have missed Marx's long discussions on colonization and slavery and the ways in which capitalism, for example, intensified its horrors in the American South, which point to the historical significance of Black liberation movements and the struggle of American Indians for national sovereignty.

What follows is a brief outline of three of the major approaches that tend to be employed in the creation of historical narratives; traditional, constructivist, and postmodern. This brief discussion is not comprehensive but

essential as it introduces readers to the field of the history of education. Next, a considerable amount of space is dedicated to developing a Marxist historiography in the history of education. This section draws on Marx in unique ways and provides the theoretical foundation for the remainder of the essay. We then briefly engage the radical revisionist challenge to the history of education during the 1960s and 1970s. Finally, we provide a critique of two major periods in the history of U.S. education making a case for a Marxist historiography in the history of education. In the process we draw on, critique and add to Bowles and Gintis (1976) and others. The approach to the history of U.S. education we offer is informed by a commitment to challenge the on going and deepening capitalist or bourgeois control over the purpose and outcome of education. That is, education continues to perpetuate and extend racial, linguistic, and ethnic inequality through unequal funding schemes, and the ongoing assumption that Black, Brown, immigrant, and English as a second-language students are inherently low-achieving and prone to violence and criminality. Such scapegoating and state-sanctioned strategy, in the face of deepening global poverty, serves to keep the price of labor low, justifying extreme exploitation on one hand, and over-the-top wealth amongst the capitalist class on the other.

Bourgeois Approaches to the History of U.S. Education

The traditional approach to history in Western society treats history as the objective, verifiable, predetermined unfolding of events. At its most harmful, the traditional approach uses the notion of objectivity to hide the agenda of situating bourgeois, settler-state, U.S. society, the center of which is the capitalist mode of production, as inevitable and permanent. At its best, however, traditional history, and the traditional historian, engages the documentary evidence with a genuine attempt to uncover hidden truths as part of the process of creating texts that reflect, as does a mirror, past events. The traditional approach to the history of education seems to reflect the former tendency—it therefore seems to be a product of the global expansion of bourgeois society combined with elements

(such as hero-worship of the elite) carried over from European feudalism.

Pedagogically, traditional history of education, of whatever sort, tends to separate *thinking from doing*. Students, in this context, confront the history curriculum passively, expected to memorize its narrative presented *not* as a narrative with a worldview and political ideology (even if unstated), but just *as it is, objective reality* (Freire, 1970; Holt, 1995; Katz, 1987). Such a pedagogical approach is particularly conducive to indoctrination. Consequently, it is not surprising that history has been used to serve the interests of the elite. Summarizing Marx (1857-1858/1973), we contend that as long as there are elite classes, from feudal lords, the enslaving plantocracy of the antebellum south, the giants of industrial capitalism to the financial investor class of late capitalism, there will be an attempt to convince the laboring classes, the dispossessed, and the colonized that their particular era is permanent, fixed, all that is *holding evil at bay*, the people's *true salvation*, and when possible, preordained by God.

A response to this approach has been the constructivist model that argues that histories are not mirror images or reflections of past events but are narratives written from different points of view informed by various analytical frameworks, serving particular interests (Holt, 1995). Perhaps the most famous of books advocating for this perspective is *What is History?* written in 1961 by British historian, Edward Hallett Carr (1961/1997), and is still often used in England and the U.S. in introduction to history survey courses (Evans, 2000).

According to Evans (2000), *What is History?*, "challenges and undermines the belief, brought to university study by too many students on leaving high school, that history is simply a matter of objective fact," and rather, "introduces them to the idea that history books, like the people who write them, are products of their own times, bringing particular ideas and ideologies to bear on the past" (pp. 1-2). This tradition, associated with sociology, places complexity at the center arguing that it is misleading to treat any historical narrative as the *only* valid story because history is so complex and can be constructed from a nearly limitless range of points of view. Katz (1987) calls Carr's (1961/1997) approach

interdependence and argues that it is a form of bourgeois ideology designed to thwart genuine inquiry into the nature of what drives historical change.

At its more useful moments, pedagogically, constructivism leads to deeper understandings of power and how it operates placing students at the center of investigation and inquiry, actively engaged in the construction process of political consciousness and knowledge formation, among other things. Critical social justice and multicultural approaches to education challenge students to place their own family histories in the context of the historical narratives they construct.

Consequently, students are challenged to understand their own connection to major events, processes, privileges and oppressions, such as colonization, religious indoctrination, genocide, manifest destiny, slavery, industrialization, patriarchy, white-supremacy, etc., as part of the educational purpose of creating democratic citizens actively engaged in social justice work. However, while these pedagogies are invaluable sources of critical education, they are not without limitations. For example, the constructivist trail to social justice can easily lead to the dead-end of over-relativism, where anything goes, and nothing is concretely and systematically confronted or challenged. Jodi Dean (2012), in her ground breaking work, argues that the Left's call for democracy amounts to nothing more than a call for more of what already exists, which has long since proven ineffective in eradicating capital's need for exploitation or settler-state oppression.

This is to say that the notion of *social justice* is so vague and all encompassing that it has arguably become *safe* and even a self-validating aspect of bourgeois society. The idea that a more *genuine* or *deep* democracy is the critical pedagogical path to social justice also tends to fail to push beyond the social universe of capital. Stated otherwise, a call for more democracy suggests that what is missing is more *participation* therefore ignoring the inherent antagonism between the capitalist class and the working class (Dean, 2012; Malott and Ford, 2015). Because this class antagonism is based on the fact that the capitalist can only create new or more value by accumulating the realized value provided by surplus labor hours (i.e. by exploiting the labor of workers), it

cannot be resolved once and for all time without the abolition of both the self-expansive process of accumulation and the settler-states' required private ownership of the means of production in the hands of a few capitalists and investment bankers. What this analysis points to is the Marxist approach to history outlined below.

Contributing to the bourgeois attacks against a revolutionary Marxism, in the 1980s, a new pseudo-radical tradition emerged from critical theory, postmodernism, which challenged both constructivist and traditional assumptions regarding the nature of truth and objectivity associated with the scientific method. Risking over-simplification, we might note that postmodernists tend to argue that language does not mimic concrete reality, but only reproduces the identity-based ideology and signifiers of particular language users. In other words, human interpretation and perspective are far too varied and infinitely complex for language and narrative to be able to fulfill Western science's promise that it can be disconnected from the relative power, privilege, and biases of its users.

While Carr and Elton (1961) argued for the central importance of *causes* and that one should study the *historian* before her or his *facts*, the postmodernist argued that histories are nothing more than competing discourses where causal explanations for the emergence of institutions, for example, such as systems of education (i.e. social class, colonialism, slavery, etc.) are too simplistic to be regarded as anything more than primitive discourses. At the heart of postmodernism is the rejection of what is identified as the Enlightenment grand narratives of Western science, including Marxism, which exclude non-Western voices by claiming itself as the one absolute, objective truth. What is more, it was argued that the break down of Fordism (i.e. the contract between labor and capital), the further globalization of the economy, the flexibilization of labor, and the creation of computers and robotics were leading to a knowledge economy and a fundamentally new era.

That is, postmodernists argued that "…the Western world…was entering a 'postmodern' epoch fundamentally different from industrial capitalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" therefore arguing that "the classical Marxist stress upon the class struggle as the driving force of

history and the working class as agency of socialist change" was outdated (Callinicos, 1989, p. 4). The postmodern challenge therefore included the position that Marxism had been proven authoritarian and thus dangerous by so-called *Stalinism* and misguided as evidenced by the fall of the Soviet Union.

Postmodernism therefore signaled a more complete break with the proletarian global class camp by more fully denouncing the world's past and present socialist states and parties. The Party itself was abandoned as an inherently oppressive hierarchical, Western construct embracing the fragmented, more identity-based new social movement with no identifiable leaders. What is more, the emergence of a more fragmented, fractured postmodern condition relegated working-class movements irrelevant because industrial production had been replaced with a new knowledge economy accompanied by new forms of control and new relations of production. Dean (2012) argues that the result of the deindustrialization of imperialist centers, such as the U.S., as been accompanied by de-unionization and the emergence of a service-sector-oriented work force. The challenge for a Marxist history of education here is therefore to recover the collective sense of the Party needed to push toward the communist horizon situated in the context of a settler-state that has always been at war with the national sovereignty of Native North American tribes and confederacies. This entails a complex mix of defending, challenging, and advancing the past work of Marxist educational historians.

In the history of education the radical revisionist work of Katz (1975; 1987) and Bowles and Gintis (1976) has therefore been under attack as modernist and thus vulgar. According to Milton Gaither (2012) the postmodern challenge has left the field of the history of education without direction or purpose, which we hope our efforts here begin to change. While Gaither (2012) argues for a free-market libertarian direction for the history of education, this essay makes the case for the contemporary relevance of a Marxist history of education. That is, like Callinicos (1989), we too believe that postmodernists are wrong in their assertion that we are in a qualitatively new era rendering Marx's analysis of how capital is augmented and circulated, globally, and colonially, irrelevant.

Following McLaren (2005), we argue that the changes mentioned above point not to a new era, but rather to a more intensified hyper-capitalism rendering the work of Marx, not less relevant, but more relevant, than ever. However, while our place of departure is the Marxist history of education work of the 1970s and 1980s, it is our intention here to go beyond it. In the process we argue that Marx's theory of history and historical work is an under-used and under-theorized source of direction for the history of education. Therefore, what follows is a brief summary of a Marxist approach to history, looking specifically at Marx.

Marx and Engel's Materialism: Contributions to a Marxist Historiography

This approach to historical investigation identifies a force, *contradiction*, embodied in all entities, as driving all change and movement. The challenge is therefore to identify the primary contradiction (i.e. driving force) behind the movement of any historical era. Marx and Engels (1846/1996) identify and outline this approach and source of contradiction in *The German Ideology,* and is therefore, worth outlining and quoting at length.

Marx and Engels' (1846/1996) chapter on Feurbach in *The German Ideology* offers a logical place of departure for elaborating on a Marxist historiography—*transforming the world cannot happen in the realm of pure thought alone*. Seeming so obvious, yet unfortunately in the context of critical pedagogy in general and critical theoretical approaches to the history of education in particular, it still needs restating. If a Marxist pedagogy is revolutionary, then a Marxist historiography must too transcend the realm of pure thought, that is, it must be grounded in a materialist understanding of the world as it exists.

What follows is an outline of the premises of the materialist method as laid out in *The German Ideology* (1846/1996). We pursue this line of reasoning because a Marxist historiography must be firmly situated in Marx's materialism, and *The German Ideology* (1846/1996) patiently spells it out. Like a Marxist critical pedagogy of becoming in general (see Malott and Ford, 2015), Marx and Engels

(1846/1996) argue "communism is for us not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things," (pp. 56-57). Communism can therefore only develop out of existing production relations at their present highly advanced stage of development with all its diversity and colonial contradictions (i.e. the contradiction that the privilege of the white working class in the U.S. stems from its historic role serving as the exploited labor used to do the work of colonialism, and whose ultimate emancipation depends upon the unification with the very oppressed nations their labor has been employed by capitalist interests to oppress and commit endless acts of violence and genocide against).

Idealism and the Materialist Method in a Marxist Historiography

True to their critical approach to theory building Marx and Engels (1846/1996) start *The German Ideology* critiquing German philosophy. However, rather than proceeding as might be expected, they deliver a hefty dose of sarcasm:

> As we hear from German ideologists, Germany has in the last few years gone through an unparalleled revolution. The decomposition of Hegelian philosophy…has developed into a universal ferment into which all the "powers of the past" are swept…Principles ousted one another, heroes of the mind overthrew each other with unheard of rapidity…All this is supposed to have taken place in the realm of pure thought…(p. 39)

Marx and Engels' sarcastic reference to the dismissal of Hegel must be understood in the context of Marx's (1844/1988) correction, not dismissal, of Hegelian dialectics (see Malott and Ford, 2015). Continuing to up the sarcastic ante Marx and Engels (1846/1996) go on naming the German warriors of pure thought "industrialists of philosophy" who had built their fortunes on exploiting Hegel's concept of the absolute spirit until it had been overthrown, leading these opportunistic theoreticians to begin forming commodities from the new materials, which Marx and Engels (1846/1996) suggest are faulty critiques of Hegel. In their description of these

industrial philosophers Marx and Engels (1846/1996) begin to allude to their correction of the German ideologists. Due to its sheer brilliance, sarcastic playfulness, and biting precision we reproduce a sizable excerpt:

> Certainly it is an interesting event we are dealing with: the putrescence of the absolute spirit. When the last spark of its life had failed, the various components…began to decompose, entered into new combinations and formed new substances. The industrialists of philosophy, who till then had lived on the exploitation of the absolute spirit, now seized upon the new combinations. Each with all possible zeal set about retailing his appropriated share. This naturally gave rise to competition, which, to start with, was carried on in moderately staid bourgeois fashion. Later when the German market was glutted, and the commodity in spite of all efforts found no response in the world market, the business was spoiled…by fabricated and fictitious production, deterioration in quality, adulteration of the raw materials…The competition turned into a bitter struggle, which is now being extolled and interpreted to us as a revolution of world significance. (pp. 39-40)

It is worth noting that the closely related constructivist and postmodern dismissals and critiques of Marx amongst the U.S. educational left, including educational historians, in the 1980s and 1990s, were based on similar types of partial understandings of Marx as the *industrial philosophers'* rejection of Hegel referred to by Marx and Engels above. We caution against dismissing Marx (or any body of work for that matter) based on secondary sources such as Bowles and Gintis (1976). For this reason we are engaging Marx and Engels in a more systematic analysis to build our Marxist historiography rather than rely on other Marxist educational historians, such as Michael Katz or Bowles and Gintis. It is this approach that demonstrates the ongoing relevance of Marx despite the so-called *new philosophers* (from postmodern and others) bold claims of expanding beyond an outdated Marx due to the new knowledge economy.

This does not mean we endorse an uncritical acceptance of the totality of Marx, but that there is an

indispensible advancement within his systematic critique of political economy. Similarly, Marx and Engels' (1846/1996), referring to the Young Hegelians, argue that not one of them had attempted to offer a systematic critique of the Hegelian system even though they claimed to go beyond it. Marx and Engels (1846/1996) summarize this debate arguing that the old Hegelians excepted the idea that the alienation of humanity is the alienation of humanity from their own consciousness, which is represented as the absolute idea, or the absolute spirit (i.e. God), whereas the young Hegelians took this as an enslaving consciousness to be replaced by a new consciousness. What the Old and New Hegelians had in common, for Marx and Engels (1846/1996), was the shared believe in, "a universal principle in the existing world" (p. 41). That is, they challenged the believe that the fight for a just society is primarily an ideological fight, and is thus a battle for a predetermined consciousness, and the imposition of a fixed ideology. Notions of creating social justice through critical consciousness might be understood as informed by purely ideological conceptions of transformation and social change. As we explore below, a Marxist historiography is therefore not only interested in challenging the ideology and bourgeois constructions of U.S. educational history. Consider:

> Since the Young Hegelians consider conceptions, thoughts, ideas, in fact all the products of consciousness, to which they attribute an independent existence, as the real chains of men (just as the Old Hegelians declared them the true bonds of human society) it is evident that the Young Hegelians only have to fight against these illusions of consciousness…This demand to change consciousness amounts to a demand to interpret reality in another way. (p. 41)

If our Marxist historiography is to point beyond narrative and consciousness as the target of transformation, it must also move the historian beyond the archives and the educator beyond the classroom (i.e. the shop floor of the educational machine factory) and into confrontation with the state and corporate material basis of the education industry and its managers and shareholders. If constructivist approaches to American educational history tend to take the development of

narrative and critical consciousness as the sole objective for achieving social justice, then it too has fallen for the same mistakes Marx and Engels (1846/1996) critique the Young Hegelians for. Before this task can be further elaborated on, we would be wise to revisit the *premises* of Marx and Engels' (1846/1996) materialist method.

Their place of departure, of course, are "real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity" (Marx & Engels, 1846/1996, p. 42). What Marx and Engels (1846/1996) are pointing to here is the empirical evidence that demonstrates the specifics of the existence of actually existing human beings, their "physical organization" and "their consequent relation to nature" (Marx & Engels, 1846/1996, p. 42). Although the point of their text is not to explore the "physical nature of man" (Vygotsky takes up this in *Mind in Society*) or the physical properties of nature, the study of history should begin with the physical properties of humanity and nature and "their modification in the course of history through the action of men" (Marx & Engels, 1846/1996, p. 42). Such considerations point to concrete aspects of human society that should underlie any serious Marxist history of education. The error made by most history of education texts is that the connections between education, the settler-state, colonialism, and the uniquely capitalistic quest to perpetually expand capital are either loose and undeveloped or they are treated as separate, mostly unrelated spheres or aspects of human society. These points are explored in later sections of this essay.

In the development of their materialist system Marx and Engels (1846/1996) then note that they are not suggesting consciousness is not important. To the contrary, they then argue that what distinguishes humans from other animals is their consciousness, and as soon as humans began producing their own means of subsistence, by transforming nature, they began distinguishing themselves from other animals. Making themselves absolutely clear here Marx and Engels (1846/1996) note that they are not just talking about "the production of the physical existence of the individuals," but rather, "a definite form of activity of these individuals" (p. 42). Marx and Engels (1846/1996) therefore conclude that *what* people are, is directly related to *what* they produce and *how*

they produce it. If a history of education does not capture these aspects of what makes different modes of production distinct from each other, then it will have failed to offer a complete analysis of the developing and often contested purposes and processes of schooling. Contrary to the idealists of German philosophy who take existence and nature as unchanging, Marx and Engels (1846/1996) argue that, "the nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production" (p. 42). Such insights pose a difficult challenge to current trends in the history of education that reduce global struggles between competing classes to theories of power.

The conscious forms of activity referred to by Marx and Engels (1846/1996) only emerge with population, with increasing intercourse between individuals. The interaction of not only individuals within nations, but the interaction between separate nations is also determined by their internal development, which is measured by the degree of their division of labor. While Marx and Engles (1846/1996), at this early, Eurocentric stage in their intellectual development, conceived of all societies as moving through the same stages of development, they eventually adopted a more sophisticated global analysis, discussed below (Anderson, 2010). However, the core of their materialist method remained relevant. If the actual existence of humans and the means by which they have developed to produce their actual lives is the primary focus of concern for a materialist method, then it follows that the particular ways production has developed within nations would be of central importance to Marx and Engels (1846/1996) and to a Marxist history of education. Of special importance to Marx and Engels (1846/1996) here is the division of labor as an indicator of society's level of development. Whereas in *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels (1846/1996) argue that all societies develop into patriarchies due to the natural division of labor between men and women, in the last years of Marx's life he began exploring with great joy and excitement the more egalitarian matriarchal division of labor in traditional Native American societies (Anderson, 2010). The implications of these insights for the communist horizon and for refusing to accept settler-state colonialism, and for Marxist and Indigenous solidarity, are tremendous. Let us consider Marx and Engels' (1846/1996)

insights regarding the division of labor at this point in their discussion:

> How far the productive forces of a nation are developed is shown most manifestly by the degree to which the division of labor has been carried. Each new productive force, insofar as it is not merely a quantitative extension of productive forces already known (for instance the bringing into cultivation of fresh land), causes a further development of the division of labor. The division of labor inside a nation leads at first to the separation of industrial and commercial from agricultural labor, and hence to the separation of town and country and to the conflict of their interests. Its further development leads to the separation of commercial from industrial labor. At the same time through the division of labor inside these various branches there develop various divisions among the individuals co-operating in definite kinds of labor…The various stages in the division of labor are just so many different forms of ownership. (p. 43)

Clearly, the materialist method outlined here is based upon the European society Marx and Engels were born into. Their framework, philosophically, stems from their correction of Hegel's system of dialectical movement and change outlined in Marx's (1844/1988) *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. That is, as humans engage their world and transform it through their activity, the division of labor naturally develops as new means of production are introduced into the growing co-operation between producers. This division of labor, in Europe, first emerges in the family and reflects differences in strength and ability due to age and sex. The father assumes the role of the patriarch dominating the labor of his wife and children laying the relational foundation for slavery. But what is dialectical about Marx and Engels' (1846/1996) approach here is that each era embodies its own negation as the development of its internal logic. While not all societies develop into patriarchies, all societies develop dialectically. The significance of looking at the development of Europe is that it is within this context that the current global capitalist system developed.

Marx and Engels (1846/1996) refer to the first form of "ownership" in the historical development of the division of labor in Europe as *tribal,* which they argue is relatively

underdeveloped beyond the forms of the division of labor found within the so-called *family*. They identify power as patriarchal, an extension of the form of slavery found within the European family. However, as mentioned above, within the notes found in the studies Marx engaged in late in his life are detailed discussions of non-European societies. Again, Marx was particularly interested in the high degree of power afforded women and thus the gender equality found within many Native American societies, such as the Iroquois or Six Nations. We might therefore read Marx and Engels' (1846/1996) universal depiction of tribal societies not as being informed by prejudice or bias, but rather, the Eurocentric result of not being aware of the Native American examples. Marx himself never traveled to the Americas, and therefore relied on anthropologists' secondary sources for his understanding of Native North Americans.

However, *The German Ideology*, like all of Marx's other major works, is primarily concerned with the development of capitalism specifically, and it specifically emerged in only one physical location, England, and thus from the European model of tribal society. With that in mind, we can appreciate Marx not just as a philosopher, an economist, or a revolutionary, but as an historian as well. Following the patriarchal form of tribalism in Europe, Marx and Engels (1846/1996) argue a form of communal State ownership emerged marked by the merger into a city of two or more tribes, either voluntarily, or by conquest.

It was within this mode of production that both movable and immovable forms of rudimentary types of private property emerged, but were subordinated by the communal nature of the society and thus the power of individuals. As immovable forms of private property began to grow in proportion to movable forms of private property, the ancient communal state gave way to feudalism. Marx and Engels (1846/1996) move through this historical development of productive forces as part of their larger critique of German idealists:

> The fact is, therefore, that definite individuals who are productively active in a definite way enter into these definite social and political relations. Empirical observation must in each separate instance bring out empirically, and without any mystification and speculation, the connection of the social and political

> structure with production. The social structure and the State are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals, but of individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they *really* are; i.e. as they operate, produce materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will. (pp. 46-47)

Again, what Marx and Engels are getting at here is the challenge to idealism that consciousness does not create reality, nor that reality necessarily or automatically informs consciousness, but that concrete material conditions exist despite individual consciousness, which can even work to distort consciousness. For example, for capitalism to function as such, the price of labor always has to be less than the value it produces, but is hidden by the money relation creating the illusion that every minute of ones labor is paid. That is, the unpaid portion of the workday, the source of capitals' augmentation, is hidden and mystified by the material relations between labor and capital themselves, as well as by an ideology of fairness and the objectivity of the market. Material conditions, in this instance, therefore do not enlighten consciousness, but distort it, serving as an obstacle to the full self-emancipation of the global proletarian class camp. Continuing with this example, we might note that developing an awareness of the hidden process of value expansion, which is the exploitation of labor, does not automatically change reality. Social change cannot happen in the mind alone.

Developing a correct understanding of the world as it exists and develops through history can only ever be a part of a materialist project, however indispensible. Speculative discussion of consciousness therefore ceases and in its place steps a Marxist history of education fully grounded within the material limits, presuppositions and conditions that education is a part of, which should therefore be reflected in any Marxist history of education. From here, Marx and Engels (1846/1996) specifically outline their materialist approach to history, which is of particular importance to this essay.

Arguing that the abstractness and idealism of German philosophers has left them with virtually no premises upon which their theories are built Marx and Engels (1846/1996)

state that the first premise of history is that "men must be in a position to live in order to 'make history'" (p. 48). In other words, "life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of these needs, the production of material life itself" (Marx and Engels, 1846/1996, p. 48). The ability to produce and reproduce life, for Marx and Engels (1846/1996), is therefore "a fundamental condition of history" (p. 48). The implications of this premise for doing history, for Marx and Engels (1846/1996), is that "in any interpretation of history one has first of all to observe this fundamental fact in all its significance and all its implications and to accord it its due importance" (p. 49). A Marxist history of education therefore begins with considerations of how education relates to this first premise. The second premise is that in the quest to satisfy basic needs, new needs arise, which Marx and Engels (1846/1996) refer to as "the first historical act" (p. 49). Education, in the capitalist era, we might observe, has played an increasingly crucial role, historically, in the creation of new needs. The development of new needs historically gave rise to the development of societies of humans, beginning with the family. This occurs not with some abstract, fixed conception of family, but as they have developed in reality. Describing this third condition of history, which is intimately connected to the first two premises, Marx and Engels (1846/1996) note:

> The third circumstance, which, from the very outset, enters into historical development, is that men, who daily remake their own life, begin to make other men, to propagate their kind: the relation between man and woman, parents and children, the *family*. The family, which to begin with is the only social relationship, becomes later, when increased needs create new social relations and the increased population new needs, a subordinate one...and must then be treated and analyzed according to the existing empirical data, and not according to "the concept of the family." (p. 49)

The final point in the above quote that abstract conceptions of the family are of little use to developing an empirical understanding of concrete reality provides the tools to critique their earlier universalization of European development. The three interrelated aspects of social existence thus far identified

(i.e. the satisfaction of needs, the creation of new needs, and with them, the growth of the size and complexity of society), for Marx and Engels (1846/1996), are *universal* aspects of history that *always* exist *despite* mode of production, mode of cooperation, or degree and form of productive development.

At this point Marx and Engels (1846/1996) introduce the significant historical observation that the reproduction of life simultaneously embodies both a natural aspect and a social aspect. Again, a Marxist approach to the history of education is concerned with the role of schooling in the development of this double relationship within the production of life—that is, as a natural relationship fulfilling the basic needs all humans require to daily maintain their existence; and the social relationship, or "the co-operation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end" (Marx and Engels, 1846/1996, p. 50).

To reiterate, this conclusion does *not* equate to the dismissal of considerations of race, gender, sexual orientation, and so on, but rather, encompasses all aspects of social life as they relate to specific historical time periods. Offering a particularly significant observation when considering a Marxist historiography in the history of education Marx and Engels (1846/1996) are instructive:

> …a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a "productive force." Further, that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence, that the "history of humanity" must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange…This connection is ever taking on new forms, and thus presents a "history" independently of the existence of any political or religious nonsense which in addition may hold men together. (p. 50)

It is clear here that Marx and Engels (1846/1996) are offering another cautionary transition into their discussion of consciousness. However, before we proceed, it should be noted that it is only after elaborating on the aforementioned "four aspects of the primary historical relationships" (Marx and Engels, 1846/1996, p. 50) that the notion of consciousness is introduced. As argued above, Marx and Engels (1846/1996)

repeatedly make clear their opposition to the notion of pure consciousness because consciousness or thought arises through language, which is a response to the intercourse between individuals in the production of life itself. Language and consciousness are therefore always a social product intimately connected to the material conditions previously discussed.

For Marx and Engels (1846/1996) the division of labor is really only present with the separation between thinking and doing, that is, between mental and manual labor. In the capitalistic era in particular, the history of education offers a way to understand how this division of labor has expanded on an extending scale. At this point Marx and Engels (1846/1996) offer another fundamental insight regarding the role of consciousness in the division of mental labor and manual labor in the history of education:

> From this moment onwards consciousness *can* really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice, that it *really* represents something without representing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and to proceed to the formation of "pure" theory, theology, philosophy, ethics, etc. But even if this theory, theology, philosophy, ethics, etc. comes into contradiction with the existing relations, this can only occur because existing social relations have come into contradiction with existing forces of production…(pp. 51-52)

Coming full circle we then begin to gain an understanding of the ways in which historical narratives in the history of education can depart from reality and thus come into contradiction with it. As we see below, a more empirically-based history of education true to Marx and Engel's (1846/1996) conception of the four aspects of history offers a clearer path out of the contradictions of capital and settler-state colonialism, that is, out of capitalism itself.

Bourgeois and Proletarian Revolutions and a Marxist Historiography

Marx and Engels' (1846/1996) materialist method clearly departs from any form of mysticism as it is driven by a desire to critique narratives and construct analysis around what rigorous inquiry suggests are the most determining factors or contradictions driving society's historical development. According to Frederick Engels (1885) Marx's approach to history, as outlined above, was particularly innovative:

> It was precisely Marx who had first discovered the great law of motion in history, the law according to which all historical struggles, whether they proceed in the political, religious, philosophical, or some other ideological domain, are in fact only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social classes, and that the existence and thereby the collisions, too, between these classes are in turn conditioned by the degree of their development of their economic position, by the mode of their production and of their exchange determined by it. (p. 14)

For Engels (1891/1993) then, Marx had a "remarkable gift…for grasping clearly the character, the import, and the necessary consequences of great historical events, at a time when these events are still in process before our eyes, or only have just taken place" (p. 9). This presents a steep challenge to our Marxist history of education, for it is no easy task to grasp the full significance of current developments in educational policy and practice, which are almost always steeped in racializations, national chauvinism, and all manner of bourgeois conceptions of intelligence and worth, as *actually* a *clear* historical manifestation and *expression* of the *division* and subsequent *struggle* between capital and labor. Demonstrating his skills as a historian and his theory of history in the Preface to the Second Edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx (1869/1972) provides a succinct summary of three different approaches to the history of the 1851 coup d'etat. However, our interest in this essay is less with the content of the coup and more on what Marx (1869/1972) contributed to, by providing an example, and thus expanding on the materialist premises of history outlined

above. Our Marxist approach to historiography therefore has much to gain through Marx's (1869/1972) analysis:

> Victor Hugo continues himself to bitter and witty invective against the responsible publisher of the *coup d'etat*. The event itself appears in his work like a bolt from the blue. He sees in it only the violent act of a single individual. He does not notice that he makes this individual great instead of little by ascribing to him a personal power of initiative such as would be without parallel in world history. Proudhon, for his part, seeks to represent the *coup d'etat* as the result of an antecedent historical development. Unnoticeably, however, his historical construction of the *coup d'etat* becomes an apologia for its hero. Thus he falls into the error of our so-called objective historians. I, on the contrary, demonstrate how the *class struggle* in France created circumstances and relationships that made it possible for a grotesque mediocrity to play a hero's part. (p. 8)

What stands out here is Marx's reference to various versions of an historical event as *constructions*, which highlights his deep understanding of the implications of the division between mental labor and manual labor, or when consciousness is separated from the life activity it is supposed to reflect. Alienated consciousness, and bourgeois consciousness in particular, is therefore free to invent all manner of stories or histories to hide or distort the class antagonism and the class struggle. This is key to Marx's method. That is, Marx's approach to constructing historical narratives always takes as its place of departure a critical engagement with existing narratives refracted through the light of empirical evidence and systematic reasoning. In other words, Marx was well aware that worldviews, and especially the products of industrial philosophers, are themselves products of history serving various purposes from justifying and perpetuating a particular practice, relationship, or society to ushering in a new one.

The challenge for the Marxist history of education, in confronting the world as it actually is, requires the ability to detect the inaccuracies and distortions that characterize bourgeois historical constructions. Without these insights the material reality of education will not be grasped, and any

attempt to put the history of education to the service of a communist alternative and challenging settler-state colonialism will be nearly impossible. Making a similar point in a relatively famous passage Marx (1852/1972) observes:

> Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. (Marx, 1852, p. 15)

Similarly, we do not make the history of education just as we please, but we construct it based on our knowledge of the world in which we confront, the world as it is. Understanding this world that we are a part of therefore requires a thorough analysis of the traditions of all dead generations that developed into the here-and-now. This is the task of history, and the stakes could not be higher. That is, knowledge about the past shapes our conceptions about the nature of the present and possibilities for the future. Constructing such Marxist-informed narratives of the history of education in the United States continues to be an unfinished project. For Marx, the task of knowledge production is not done simply for the sake of doing it, but it is part of a larger push toward removing all of the barriers that prevent the world's working classes (including teachers) from *becoming* (see Malott and Ford, 2015).

Contributing to a Marxist historiography of *becoming* (i.e. becoming communist) is Marx's (1852/1972) conception of bourgeois and proletarian revolutions. That is, if we understand education as never neutral, but always political, or always either serving the interests of the world system as it exists or challenging it, then education either serves the bourgeois revolution and system or it works for proletarian revolution and communism. In other words, if we view education as either revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, then Marx's discussion of bourgeois versus proletarian revolutions is highly important to our Marxist historiography for the history of education. Consider: while revolutions in general tended to, "conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them their names, battle cries, and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in

this time-honored disguise and this borrowed language," bourgeois revolutions in particular "*awakened the dead in order to glorify the new struggles, not to once again find the spirit of revolution, or of making its ghost walk again"* (Marx, 1852/1972, pp. 15-17).

In other words, Marx (1852/1972) argued that bourgeois revolutions, "required recollections of past world history in order to drug themselves concerning their own content" (p. 18). That is, the content of bourgeois revolutions (and the content of bourgeois constructions of the history of education) that Marx so often refers to is the promise of freedom and equality, which he argues, because of the creation of a working class of dependents it requires, can only ever be an empty promise. As a result, bourgeois revolutions do not deliver societies new content for themselves, but rather, "the state" returns it "to its oldest form…shamelessly simple domination…easy come, easy go" (Marx, 1852/1972, pp. 18-19).

> Bourgeois revolutions…storm swiftly from success to success; their dramatic effect outdo each other; men and things seem set in sparkling brilliants; ecstasy is the everyday spirit; but they are short lived; soon they have attained their zenith, and a long crapulent depression lays hold of society before it learns soberly to assimilate the results of its storm-and-stress period. (p. 19)

Bourgeois or traditional conceptions of the history of education serve this same master, full of the same delusions of benevolence and hostility towards the inconvenient facts of class antagonism and class struggle. Offering a helpful yardstick in which to judge the precision and effectiveness of our revolutionary Marxist historiography of becoming for the history of education Marx's (1852/1972) conception of proletarian revolutions is indispensible:

> …Proletarian revolutions, like those of the nineteenth century, criticize themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin afresh, deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltriness of their first attempts, seem to throw down their adversary only in order that he may

> draw new strength from the earth and rise again, more gigantic, before them, recoil ever and anon from the indefinite prodigiousness of their own aims, until a situation has been created which makes all turning back impossible…(p. 19)

Paulo Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, unlike many of his later works, is informed by this rigorous, never-ending cycle of reflection and action tirelessly committed to and driven by the urgency of the global, proletarian class camp to succeed in capturing the capitalist state and abolishing surplus labor time (i.e. exploitation), the foundation of capital's economic existence. Internal, comradely critique (including self-critique) of Marxist, educational theory and historiography is therefore similarly informed by the desire to improve not only our understanding, but our ability to practice an effective Marxist historiography of *becoming communist.* In other words, a Marxist history of education is equally committed to an analysis of the present moment as *history in the making* always committed to pushing the capitalist *now* into a socialist future through the organization of *the party*.

However, rather than building upon Marx, as we have sought to do thus far, with the postmodern turn away from Marxism in critical education theory in the 1980s, the Marxist history of education work of Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Michael Katz (1975, 1987) has largely stagnated and even faded from the offerings of big publishing corporations that supply the country's foundations of education classes with textbooks. There are, however, noteworthy exceptions, such as Peter McLaren's (2006) Marxist, foundations of education book, *Life in Schools*. However, *Life in Schools* is not specifically a history of education book. It is more of an introduction to critical pedagogy. If this essay can contribute, in any way, to bringing Marx back to the history of education, then it will have been a worthwhile effort.

While we have countless brilliant colleagues around the world, and in the US in particular, doing important critical pedagogy work in colleges and universities, it is probably not too far fetched to assume that the history of education classes that have managed to survive in this hostile environment are being taught from increasingly uncritical perspectives that turn a blind eye to the massive devastation being wrought by

global capitalism, especially on *Black lives*, which Black Lives Matter, as a resistance movement, is arguably at the frontlines of. Part of the problem, as suggested above, is that current mainstream history of education books do not do an even mildly satisfactory job of demonstrating how *the traditions of the past weigh like a nightmare on the brain of the living*, to paraphrase Marx.

However, we do not want to suggest that there are no Marxist scholars advancing this history of education work. Peter McLaren's vast body of work, as well as John Bellamy Foster's (2012) "Education and the Structural Crisis of Capital" are good examples that have advanced Bowles and Gintis' (1976) Marxist approach to the history of education. However important and insightful this work is, it is not to be found in today's history of education textbooks. This essay is an attempt to contribute to the vast body of recent Marxist education work (see, for a very small sample; Allman, 1999; Darder, 2009; Ford, 2014; Hill, 2013; Kumar, 2011; Malott, 2012; Malott and Ford, 2015; McLaren, 2005; McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2001; McLaren and Jaramillo, 2007, 2010), which is a vital foundation for this on-going project.

However, it is worth noting that this discussion on a few of the primary approaches to teaching history should begin to shed light on why there are competing approaches to teaching history and therefore competing historical narratives. History, we might say, is not a fixed set of facts, but rather is an ongoing debate. But historical narratives are not merely neutral constructions informed by a multitude of positionalities representing the fractured, fragmented postmodern condition. Histories are either bourgeois and counter-revolutionary, and therefore, designed to serve the interests of a dominant/ruling class, or they are revolutionary, and thus, strive to be part of the global class war and proletarian movement against global capitalism and settler-state colonialism.

A Revolution in the History of Education

Beginning in the 1960s the history of education, as a discipline, began to be fundamentally challenged, especially in terms of debating the historic role that social class has or has

not played in educational outcomes, policies, and purposes. In *Reconstructing American Education* Michael Katz (1987) offers a significant contribution to this *history* of the history of education. Reflecting on the transformation that began to challenge traditional approaches to the history of education, Katz (1987) notes:

> Starting in the 1960s, a modest revolution took place in historical writing about education. Historians rejected both the metaphor and the method that had characterized most reconstructions of the educational past. The method had divorced inquiry into the development of educational practices and institutions from the mainstream of historical scholarship and left it narrow, antiquated, and uninteresting. The metaphor had portrayed education as a flower of democracy planted in a rich loam that its seeds replenished. (p. 5)

Katz here, employing the methods of historiography, echoes Marx and Engels' (1846/1996) insistence on empirical accuracy and sensitivity to the politics and processes of the construction of historical narratives. Working to reunite cutting edge developments in history with narratives on the history of education, the result was a much more critical assessment of the origins and purposes of public education. However, despite this advancement, many important developments in history proper continued to remain absent from the work of the radical revisionists referred to by Katz (1987). For example, much of the historical work pertaining to the colonization of the Americas, the genocide and ongoing subjugation of Native Americans, as well as the work documenting the African holocaust of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and slavery, and the resistance to it, as well as the militant history of African American led share croppers' unions after the Civil War, are no where to be found in the work best known as the epitome of a Marxist history of education in the U.S., that is, Bowles and Gintis' (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America.*

Bowles and Gintis' (1976) important advancement could have contributed significantly to the relevancy of a Marxist historiography through a critical engagement with a number of fundamental texts representing an African American and Native American renaissance in throwing off the colonialist narratives of bourgeois interests and building the disciplines

of African American studies and Native American studies. At the very least George James' (1954/2005) ground-breaking book *Stolen Legacy* exploring the intellectual and scientific knowledge European slavers and capitalist society in general, benefited from. The important work of Harry Haywood (2012), the self-proclaimed Black Bolshevik, building upon Stalin's position of oppressed nations within nations, such as African Americans in the U.S., as an argument and strategy for fighting capitalism within the U.S., would have added tremendously to *Schooling in Capitalist America*. Even W.E.B. Dubois' (2001) and Walter Woodson's (2013) texts, *The Education of Black People* and *The Miseducation of the* Negro, respectively, would have provided much needed historical insight for better understanding Bowles and Gintis' (1976) discussion of the education of America's Black working class.

In terms of better understanding the conquest of America and the ongoing oppression of American Indians, Vine Deloria Jr.'s (1969) classic text, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto,* signaled the beginning of the American Indian Movement and a vast body of work. Published seven years before *Schooling in Capitalist America*, Deloria's (1969) work would have been readily available to Bowles and Gintis (1976) as they wrote their classic text. While engaging in what is somewhat of a pointless exercise, the point here is that we can look back critically as current trends in educational Marxism tend not to fall victim of such errors that wrongfully open the door for counter-revolutionaries to argue that Marxism believes the working class is a group of privileged white workers. While the so-called first-world, white working class is undeniably the most privileged sub-group of the working class, they represent only a small fraction of the global working class. Nevertheless, before the work of Michael Katz (1975) and Bowles and Gintis (1976), the class antagonisms that have propelled the quantitative changes in specific modes of production, that, when having reached a certain point of development, give way to qualitative transformations leading to the transition from feudalism, to capitalism, to socialism, have tended not to be identified as an important tendency or dialectical law of historical change characteristic of the human societies in which histories of education are situated. However, despite this important shift, the revisionists, including Bowles and Gintis (1976), while supporting socialism in the abstract, turned against actually

existing socialism. For example, in their chapter explaining capitalism and thus critiquing capitalist countries such as the U.S., Bowles and Gintis (1976) make a point to also break from "state socialist countries" in "Eastern Europe" because they "were never democratic" due to the "ruling elites" maintaining a hierarchical system of control over "production" (p. 81). Bowles and Gintis (1976) therefore fail to lay bare the global class war and acknowledge their lack of solidarity with the proletarian global class camp, which, during the time of their writing, represented socialist countries and millions of people of color over the world (Malott and Ford, 2015). It is a tragedy that the global proletarian class camp representing the desires of so many millions of people of color from Africa to Latin America has been propagandized in the U.S. as a movement of the white working class.

Situated within this context, we might observe that the term *critical pedagogy* was created by Henry Giroux's (1981) as an attempt to dismiss socialism and the legacy of Karl Marx, first appearing, I believe, in *Ideology, Culture, and The Process of Schooling*. Critical pedagogy, as a discipline within educational theory, therefore seemed to have been constructed as a conscious break from Marx, from Marxism, and from actually existing socialism. We might therefore argue that critical pedagogy has not become counter-revolutionary, it began as a conscious betrayal of the global proletarian class camp. This is not to say that actually existing socialist governments have not committed serious mistakes. Rather, to oppose socialist countries and to celebrate their demise, is to join the capitalist class's attack on the worlds' working class' struggle against exploitation and resistance against colonialism and imperialism. Giroux's (1983) widely influential text, *Theory and Resistance in Education: A Pedagogy for the Opposition*, continued to serve this purpose.

That is, Giroux (1983) argues that after World War II, in both imperialist capitalist states and countries in the so-called socialist bloc, workers suffered the same forms of increasing alienation and the suppression of political and economic freedom due to repression and authoritarianism. Giroux (1983), in line with imperialist propagandists, contributes to the exaggerations and generalizations of the mistakes and shortcomings of various communist countries while ignoring the social gains and achievements of the workers' states, from

Eastern Europe, North Korea, Burkina Faso, China, to Cuba. However, while Bowles and Gintis (1976) and the radical revisionists sought to employ Marx in their work, Giroux sought to not only contribute to the attack on *real existing socialism*, he also sought to break from Marx all together. In other words, even though Bowles and Gintis (1976) took an incorrect stance against socialist countries, they supported the possibility of a more perfectly worked out socialist alternative not yet created.

Giroux (1983), on the other hand, made a case against existing workers' states as part of his argument against Marx in general. Giroux's work has therefore contributed to the shift from the materialism of Marx, represented by Paulo Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, to a turn back to ideology, culture, and knowledge production similar to the German philosophers critiqued by Marx and Engels (1846/1996) in *The German Ideology*. While a full engagement in the history of critical pedagogy is beyond the scope of this essay, we can re-emphasize the depth of the anti-communist trends operating within imperialist states, especially in the U.S., and thus found in both critical pedagogy and historiography. In other words, the fact that even within Marxist scholarship and scholarship stemming from critical theory you find strong currents against the legacy of worker states, is telling.

Again, it is not to say that serious mistakes were not made under socialism. The point is to support the millions of brothers and sisters around the world fighting imperialism and capitalist exploitation through the creation of worker states, however imperfect and unfinished. The communist challenge and responsibility is to support forward communist progress rather than sitting back while worker states are overrun by capitalists, who themselves are governed by the laws of accumulation, that is, an insatiable appetite for surplus value, whatever the human or environmental costs. The decline of the socialist states since the fall of the Soviet Union therefore represents a major set back for the process of overcoming imperialism and global capitalism. This is a position that is at odds with nearly the entire critical pedagogy movement. However, if we are to take Marx's description of the proletarian revolution seriously, then such biting self-critiques must be considered.

Nevertheless, the radical revisionists offered an important advancement from the traditional narrative. For example, in 1919, Ellwood Cubberley, Dean of the School of Education at Stanford University, in his book, *Public Education in the United States: A Study and Interpretation of American Educational History*, offers a seemingly safe, nothing-to-be-alarmed-by approach to history and the role of education in the history of human societies. Cubberley's (1919) narrative is devoid of the class antagonism and struggle a genuine engagement with the messy facts of history reveals. Rather, Cubberley (1919) paints an abstract picture of relative social harmony marching along the road of progress:

> The history of education is essentially a phase in the history of civilization. School organization and educational theory represent but a small part of the evolution, and must be considered after all as but an expression of the type of civilization which a people has gradually evolved… Its ups and downs have been those of civilization itself, and in consequence any history of education must be in part a history of the progress of the civilization of the people whose educational history is being traced. (p. 2)

Cubberley's (1919) narrative is predictable enough: good triumphs inevitably, and the evidence, of course, resides in the very existence of the U.S. and its public education system. The story would not be complete if Cubberley (1919) had not gone on, as he did, to triumphantly trace the roots of American society exclusively to European sources arguing that it was Christianity that preserved the civilized culture of ancient Greece following the wreck of the Middle Ages allowing the modern era to emerge. Rather casually Cubberley (1919) goes on to explain the "discovery and settlement of America" (p. 11) as a carry over effect of the sense of adventure engendered by the Crusades.

In the process, Cubberley (1919) offers no mention of the tumultuous, violent and uneven transition from feudalism to capitalism or the diverse interactions with, and crimes against, the hundreds of distinct Native American civilizations that populated the Americas, many of whom continue to struggle to survive in what has been referred to as the *colonial present* (Grande, 2015). Cubberley's (1919) narrative is consequently wholly supportive of not only colonization, but

capitalist production relations, suggesting (by not mentioning them) that bourgeois society is either timeless (i.e. as natural as gravity and thus one of the immutable laws of nature) or is one of the great accomplishments of antiquity preserved, somehow (luckily, it is suggested), by Christianity. As mentioned below by Marx (1857-1858/1973), this is an old ideological tactic used by many elite, ruling classes from era to era, that is, to suggest their time is timeless and thus inevitable and perpetual.

Challenging the rosy picture painted by traditional historians who argue it was the transition from a rural to an urban social context that led to the emergence of public education, Katz (1987) argues a more thorough engagement with the history literature suggesting that the most important development in the United States during the late nineteenth century was the monumental growth of capitalism, which was the real impetus for not only public education, but urbanization and mass immigration. As we will see below the difficulty of capitalists establishing capitalism on the Eastern seaboard of what came to be the United States was due to the overabundance of cheap land made available by the unintentional genocide of Native Americans, a major barrier to establishing the necessary dependence among producers on capitalists for jobs. This nuance is missed by Katz, which greatly impedes his analysis of the emergence of capitalism in the U.S. Consequently, once capitalist production relations appear to be more permanently established the educational needs of capitalists begin to change. However, as we will further illustrate, the radical revisionists challenged the traditional narrative that depicted the growth of common schooling and public education as evidence of the flourishing of democracy and equal opportunity, arguing, instead, that the emergence of alienating and immiserating capitalist production relations and new dehumanizing factory-based means of production led to worker unrest and rebellions leading industrialists to realize workers had to be socialized into capitalist society as a form of social control. This long-held argument, while important for understanding how to subvert capitalist schooling practices and policies, misses an important nuance of the factory machine and how it accelerated the intellectual degradation of individual workers prompting the British government in the mid nineteenth century to pass a series of Factory Acts requiring the

education of child laborers in an attempt to save society from capitalism (Malott and Ford, 2015). While this discussion is important for understanding the depths of capitalisms' tendency to degrade and mangle the human laborer, industrialists, while resisted early attempts of mandated education in England, were soon convinced of the need to control the ideas and beliefs of their workers. That is, the self-empowerment of those relegated to the status of *wageworker* needed to be eroded and replaced by a sense (i.e. a false consciousness) that the dependence of labor on the capitalist for a job is permanent, inevitable, and beneficial to the working-class. In other words, the production relations between workers and capitalists needed to be cemented in the minds of workers as permanently fixed and thus normal and natural. Offering another insight into the changing educational needs of an emerging capitalist class, Bowles and Gintis (1976) point out that ideologically, feudalism was informed by a religious interpretation of the world where ones' social rank or position was not understood to be the product of a political history of conquests and subjugations, or even the outcome of ones own intelligence and drive, but preordained by God rendering any challenges to the caste system or one's place within it as an attack on, and thus, a crime against, God.

Bourgeois society, on the other hand, is based upon an ideology of freedom and equality, while actually practicing an historical process of inequality and dehumanization. Consequently, unlike in feudalism, in capitalist democracies (i.e. bourgeois society), there exists an obvious contradiction between discourse and practice that has created a need for a series of cultural/ideological/political institutions (such as schools, the state, religion, the public relations advertising firm, the media spectacle, etc.) whose purpose is to both train workers in the necessary skills for productive labor as well as to manufacture consent through ideological indoctrination. Following Bowles and Gintis (1976), we can call this the purpose of education in capitalist society, which changes over time, and from region to region, depending on capital's changing needs.

The dominant ideology also changes as it is met with and challenged by, the collective agency of various strata of labor and non-capitalists, from unions, settler-state

environmentalists, to Indigenous revolutionaries and sovereigns to Black Lives Matter rebels.

However, these and many other developments (some of which are discussed below) were not greeted with open arms by the history of education establishment. Katz (1987) dedicates a substantial part of his book, *Reconstructing American Education*, to discussions on the severe backlash against what were new developments in American history and the history of American education. Katz (1987) concludes that because of the new critical scholarship, the old story lines could no longer be used. As a result, new narratives were constructed or developed by bourgeois historians that seemed to be dedicated to downplaying the significance of capitalism in the history of American education. Summarizing this tendency Katz (1987) argues:

> …Even critics of the new history of education admit that a simple narrative of the triumph of benevolence and democracy can no longer be offered seriously by any scholar even marginally aware of recent writing in the field. The problem for critics, therefore, has been twofold: the destruction of critical historians' credibility and the construction of an alternative and equally plausible interpretation of the educational past…At their worst, the new critics have descended to falsification, distortion, and ad hominem attacks as they have tried to build an apologist case for American education…One major intellectual goal has animated the work of the new critics since the 1970s: as much as possible, they want to loosen the connections between education and social class in America's past and present. (pp. 136-137)

Katz is documenting here the back and forth between scholars of the history of education and the role the critical revisionists played in transforming the field. We might argue that the 1960s revolution in the history of education failed to adequately critique the narratives and assumptions surrounding the colonization of the Americas. If traditional history of education scholars failed to engage virtually all of the latest research in history, much of which came to rather revolutionary conclusions, the critical or Marxist revisionists seemed to have missed new developments in history pertaining to the colonial era, as suggested above. The following section is therefore crucial in bringing to the surface

the significance of the colonial era in the establishment of global capitalism and creating the capitalist need for a common system of mass education around the 1840s.

The Colonial Era

> The discovery of America was another development of the desire for travel and discovery awakened by the Crusades…After the first century of exploration of the new continent had passed, and after the claims as to ownership had been largely settled, colonization began. (Cubberley, 1919, p. 11)

Cubberley's (1919) quote (and the history of education book it was taken from more generally) represents a combination of what Katz (1987) describes as a pre-twentieth-century approach that seeks "direct and superficial causes—such as an unmediated link between immoral behavior and poverty" and the approach of "the first social scientists in the 1890s" who "viewed the world as an immensely complex series of interconnecting variables mutually reacting to one another" (p. 140). Katz (1987) argues that interdependence "signals a retreat from any attempt to find a principle or core within a social system," consequently, "the levers of change remain obscure and no basis exists for moral judgment" (p. 140). Clearly, Cubberley's (1919) explanation for European expansion and colonial pursuits as the result of a thirst for adventure can be described as "superficial" and "lacking in moral judgment." Cubberley's (1919) larger discussion of the history of education is unapologetically Euro-centric. We can observe this legacy of pro-capitalist Euro-centric apology reproduced in history of education textbooks in the decades following Cubberley. Vassar's (1965) history of American education text offers an example:

> The missionary organizations were far more successful in their endeavors among the Negroes than among the Indians…in this great crusade…developing honest hard working Christian slaves…A large population [of Native

> Americans were] not slaves [adding to the difficulty of educating Indians]. (Vassar, 1965, pp. 11-12)

While Cubberley's (1919) Euro-centrism stems from his glaring omission of even the mention of a Native American presence, Vassar's (1965) narrative is equally Euro-centric, but for implying that the assimilation of Native Americans into mainstream America represents a "great crusade." That is, Vassar (1965) presents colonialism, a process that led to centuries of physical, biological, and cultural genocide, as a positive force. What Vassar (1965) does not explicitly state, but implies, is that bourgeois society represents a more advanced stage in human social development as compared to not just Europe's feudal societies, but pre-Columbian Native American societies as well. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, the racism and white supremacy of bourgeois historians was either not discussed by the radical revisionists, or they themselves reproduced it:

> The Western frontier was the nineteenth-century land of opportunity. In open competition with nature, venturesome white adventurers found their own levels, unfettered by birth or creed. The frontier was a way out—out of poverty, out of dismal factories, out of crowded Eastern cities. The frontier was the Great Escape. (Bowles and Gintis, 1976, p. 3)

We present Cubberley (1919) and Vassar (1965) next to Bowles and Gintis (1976) to demonstrate both the difference and continuity between traditional, conservative education historians and Marxist education historians on the issue of colonialism/Westward expansion. As previously suggested, Bowles and Gintis' (1976) somewhat apologetic statement on the colonization of the Americas is not a position they borrowed from Marx for Marx was well aware of the barbaric destructiveness the expansion of capital had on the non-capitalist and non-Western societies it expanded into.

What is most obvious here is Bowles and Gintis' (1976) empathy for the children and grand-children of the expropriated peasant-proprietors of Europe who were

"chastised for their enforced transformation into vagabonds and paupers" (Marx, 1867/1967, p. 734). The acknowledgement of the destructive and oppressive nature of capitalism here represents a clear break from the corporate apologist narratives that have dominated before and since Bowles and Gintis (1976). However, at the same time, there is a haunting silence within Bowles and Gintis' narrative seemingly more interested in the fate of immigrant laborers than the ancient tribes and confederacies that continue to struggle to survive within a colonial present that can too easily seem perpetual or permanent. This exclusionary tendency within the Marxist tradition, despite the contrary testimony of Marx's own work, has contributed to an unfortunate misunderstanding of the contributions of Marx.

Even progressive education historians in the 1980s and beyond continued to reproduce colonialist narratives. Button and Provenzo (1983/1989), for example, after explaining the colonization of the Americas as the result of a growing middle-class gaining wealth from a period of "peace, prosperity and trade" (p. 6), portray Native Americans as the helpless, primitive victims of progress:

> The Native Americans…belonged to hundreds of tribes with almost as many different languages. In general, they had little in common with one another and did not unite to resist the settlement of their lands by the early colonists. The existence of numerous rivers and harbors, of a moderate climate, and natives unorganized for resistance, made North America splendid for colonization, if not for immediate exploitation. (p. 6)

After offering a contradictory paragraph on the next page regarding Native American resistance in what is now Virginia, Button and Provenzo (1983/1989) seem to offer this short passage as their explanation for the disappearance of Native Americans on the Eastern seaboard—an assumption that is patently false. Even more recent history of education texts written from progressive, constructivist perspectives too often reproduce the old colonial narratives:

> Native Americans…were a diverse and occasionally contentious population, embracing hundreds of different social and cultural groupings. The vast majority lived in agricultural and hunting societies, cast on a scale considerably smaller than European nations, even if there were exceptions in certain tribal confederations. Although the American Indian population was substantial, it was spread thinly across the landscape. Divided into relatively small and isolated tribes and without advanced military technology, the Native Americans were often unable to resist the demands of Europeans in disputes over land or other issues. As a consequence, they were readily defeated, exploited, and pushed out of the way to make room for the expanding White population. (Rury, 2013, p. 27)

It is astonishing that a book published in 2013 called *Education and Social Change* would continue to depict American Indians or Native Americans as primitive victims helpless against the powerful onslaught of Europe's superiority. If the many interpretations of Marx's work all tend to embrace the ethics of international solidarity among the world's oppressed peoples, then why have Marxists, of all people, too often been silent on the long legacy of colonialism? The most plausible explanation for this silence has to do with Marx's early work that viewed colonialism as a positive force (Marx, 2007). If mainstream Marxism tends to be based on the Communist Manifesto, which is situated within the assumption that colonialism is a positive, civilizing force because it is a necessary step toward socialism, then this confusion can partly be explained by the complexity of Marx himself. That is, because of the enormity of Marx's body of work, and because he was perpetually and rigorously advancing his ideas and deepening his insights, his positions on various topics like colonialism changed over time.

Consequently, it is easy to understand how Marx's work can lead to many different versions of Marxism (Hudis, 2012). Much of Marx's late writings (a great deal still unpublished), which have been largely discounted as the product of a liberal turn, boredom, or triviality (Anderson, 2010), contain explorations into gender equality within non-Western societies, for example, offering a substantial challenge to the

homogenizing drive of the global expansion of capitalism through colonialism. In other words, it seems as if Marx began to conclude that the challenges of creating a post-capitalist global society are so enormous, all of humanity's gifts are needed, from our intellectual endowments to our vast cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity. However, even in Marx's most known work, Volume I of Capital (1867/1967), a clear understanding of the destructive role of colonialism's primitive accumulation is expressed:

> The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalized the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation. (pg. 751)

However, while mainstream textbooks tend to continue to reproduce dominant narratives ignoring such critical insights regarding the very early roots of capitalism as a global system, an early partial-exception to the rule is Joel Spring's (1986/1994) *The American School*, which dedicated individual chapters to various ethnic groups, including Native Americans and African Americans, for example. However, Springs' (1986/1994) engagement with indigenous communities begins in the mid-nineteenth century, skipping the entire colonial era thereby leaving the legitimacy of the colonial expansion of capital's bourgeois society unaddressed. Outside of the history of education discipline there exists a vast body of critical pedagogy work that addresses, in various ways, the history of education as revolutionary pedagogy challenging all that is dehumanizing from the rule of capital, the colonial present, to the new Jim Crow and racism without race. Before we move on, it is worth noting that even David Boers' (2007) *History of American Education Primer*, published in a well-respected critical education series, begins his book with a familiar story:

> The evolution of American education has occurred since our nation was founded in the 1600s. Jonathon

> Winthrop and his band of followers sought to avoid religious persecution in England. They sailed to America and began to set up communities in the New England area that were meant to be models for what would eventually become American society. (p. 1)

It is bewildering that well-established history of education scholars would continue to reproduce the simplistic argument that it was religious persecution alone, existing in a vacuum, that accounts for the first permanent, English settlements in America. Fortunately, there exists other history of education texts offering some diversity of narrative. For example, and to their credit, Wayne Urban and Jennings Wagoner (2009), in the fourth edition of their text, *American Education: A History*, reassess the old narrative reproduced by Boers (2007), arguing, instead, that the colonies were not established with the intention of building a new society, but rather, were a business venture, that is, an investment opportunity. To understand the first New Englanders' relationship with pre-existing indigenous confederacies, it is important to remember that the colonists faced the continent and its communities as religiously-mediated investors who came from a pre-existing English capitalist society that had long been primitively accumulated and normalized and naturalized traditions of private property and a market in human labor.

In Jamestown, VA, the continents' first permanent English settlement established in 1607, relied on a friendly relationship with the local Powhatan Confederacy for their own survival and for the success of their investment. However, the capitalist purpose of the colony, and thus its very existence, presented a major barrier to peace. At the same time, renowned American Indian historian, Robert Venables (1994), makes a compelling case that, before dissolving, the relationship between the colony and the Powhatan Confederacy was mutually beneficial.

> …The London Company's investment in the highly profitable tobacco plantation business relied on peaceful relations with the local Powhatan Confederacy. Tobacco farmers supplied Powhatans with trade goods in exchange for food, which allowed colonists to invest

> their labor in the cash crop not worrying much about food. Powhatan's access to trade goods allowed them to grow stronger and defeat their rivals to the west thereby gaining access to trade with the copper-producing Indians of the Great Lakes (Venables, 2004, Pp. 81)

Clearly, Venables (2004) does not see the Powhatans' as helpless victims, but as savvy negotiators committed to their own national interests. However, because of the labor-intensive nature of tobacco production and because of its profitability as a use-value, by 1619 a Dutch ship brought the first shipment of African slave-laborers to Virginia to keep pace with the demand for labor. Because of these reasons, it also made more sense to focus labor on tobacco production and continue to rely on the Powhatans for food. Consequently, fifteen years after their arrival, the colonists continued to rely on the Native communities for food, which might not have been a problem, but their numbers were forever growing, therefore placing increasing pressure on the Powhatan's food supply.

The colonists also came to the Americas with an old racist ideology stemming from an invented, Christian-related, European identity (Mohawk, 1992), which resulted in a long legacy of colonists viewing and treating Native Americans as inferior. Consequently, it was not uncommon for colonists to disregard Powhatan national authority and settle land without compensation or consultation, leading to tension and conflict with Native communities. Perhaps one of the last straws was the colonialists' plans to establish an Indian college, which American Indians saw for themselves no advantages. It was understood that adopting the settlers capitalistic ways would give the elites among the new settlers a major advantage by stripping the Powhatans of their own economy and means to satisfy and expand their needs. If the foreign capitalist becomes the ruler of the land, then the American Indians would forever be subordinate in the relationship. Eventually, having their land-base, food supply, culture, and very existence threatened, the Powhatans decided to terminate the colony. Commenting on this decision Venables (2004) explains:

> In 1622 Powhatan warriors, intimately familiar with colonists routines from being their primary food vendor, simultaneously struck 31 locations across a 70 mile area killing nearly 350 of a population of 1200. (Pp. 81-82)

In the aftermath, hundreds of settlers sailed back to England. Cut off from their food supply as many as five hundred more colonists die of starvation that winter. As a result, James I took over the London Company's investment. That is, having been operated as a private venture for the first 17 years, Virginia, "became a royal colony in 1624 and control transferred to the Crown appointed governor" (Urban & Wagoner, Pp. 18). While this was an important development, following Venables (2004) and other historians, the ten years of bloody war that followed and the ways Indian policy were forever transformed (from co-existence to extermination), have had far more serious implications for the fate of the indigenous communities in North America (and the world over). According to Venables (2004), "the 1622 attack did more than merely define future Indian policy in Virginia as one of conquest…It encouraged an already existent English colonial attitude of racial superiority" (p. 84). For example, after learning of the Powhatan war, the Pilgrims in Massachusetts erected a fort fearing the Narragansetts. However, the struggle for the Eastern seaboard was ultimately determined in 1633/1634 as smallpox wiped out Indians in a massive epidemic. Puritans, as might be expected, viewed this unintentional genocide as an act of God. Governor Winthrop:

> If God were not pleased with our inheriting these parts, why did he drive out the natives before us? And why does he still make room for us by diminishing them as we increase? (Quoted in Venables, 2004,Pp. 89)

Following conquest, and the finalization of the process of westward expansion, settler-state policy toward indigenous communities has consistently eroded indigenous independence/sovereignty, characterized by paternalism, indifference, and exploitative abuse. The boarding school era is a case in point. As is demonstrated throughout this section,

the failure to critically engage the legacy of colonialism and expansion within the history of education is a failure to fully grasp what Marx characterized as the global expansion of capitalism and bourgeois society.

The Common School Era

As Native Americans were being pushed west into *Indian Territory* and the process of physically expanding the social universe of capital across the continent was under way, the middle-class, Calvinist, Massachusetts education crusader of the mid nineteenth century, Horace Mann, worked hard to establish a state system of common schooling for all children (which, during the mid-1800s, meant white children). Educational historians, from conservative traditionalists, progressives, to Marxists, concede the importance of the first successful common school movement to the development of the United States. That is, because of the central importance regarding Horace Mann in colleges of education across the United States (he is the equivalent of the founding father of public education in the US who realized the vision of Thomas Jefferson's failed proposals, at both the state and national level, for a General Diffusion of Education, penned with an eye toward greater participation, at least for white males), Katz' (1975) and Bowles and Gintis' (1976) challenge to how he had traditionally been conceptualized represents a paradigm shift in the field. However, as we will see below, these new, critical narratives focused on bringing to the surface the importance of social class in explaining why common schools were ultimately supported by industrial capitalists, but do not situate the process of capitalistic expansion within the context of Native American subjugation and agency, which one would expect given their silence on the issue in general. Our intention here is to highlight the important contributions of the critical education historians while simultaneously contributing to the discussion. Summarizing the dominant view of Horace Mann in their book, *History of Education and Culture in America*, Button and Provenzo (1983/1989) offer the following analysis:

> Historians have tended to look upon the Common School Movement in wholly positive terms. The traditional wisdom has been that by providing free universal elementary education, the common schools were important vehicles of social reform that provided opportunities for newly arrived immigrants and the poor to improve the conditions of their lives and those of their children. Led by idealistic and humanitarian intellectuals, an enlightened working class was able to overcome the narrow interests of not only the wealthy elite, but also the conservative religious groups. (pg. 93-94)

This traditional narrative that replaces class struggle with educational attainment as the true path to economic advancement is more or less today's rallying cry of progressive educators fighting for public education and its necessary funding. For Mann, however, as Secretary of Education of Massachusetts with a background in law, prosperity came not from education, but it stemmed from the rapid expansion and development of capitalism. The role of education was to provide workers and immigrants with the proper moral foundation (Cremin, 1957). Mann believed that if that the children of workers and capitalists alike attended the same schools, workers would develop a life-long loyalty for the bosses and industry. This was the basis for Mann's so-called moral education. Mann's reports and speeches were therefore filled with vague relationships between intelligence and poverty. For his moral curriculum Mann held all the pedagogical sophistication of his day conscious that a student-centered pedagogy was fundamental to the common schools' success because a child will not really learn and internalize the lessons unless he is engaged and genuinely committed to the learning experience (Cremin, 1957).

As was the case with the transition from feudalism to capitalism, bourgeois society is being portrayed here as the embodiment of freedom of opportunity and thus equality. Marx argues that the mistake social-reformers make is believing that the freedom and equality promised by bourgeois society is actually possible within the production relations of capital. Mann demonstrated no real understanding of capitalism and the way its internal drive to limitlessly expand value will always lead to the premature exhaustion and death

of the laborer unless regulated by policy, or slowed down by working class resistance. But the whole legacy of education reform, especially since the Great Depression of 1929, including the Civil Rights Movement that made equal educational opportunity one of its central rallying cries, is based on the cruel illusion that enough social justice can be obtained within capitalism thereby inadvertently working as a counter-revolutionary force against the full emancipation of the global proletarian class camp.

At the same time, popular movements, such as the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s in the United States that led to the social movement era of the 1960s and 1970s represents the developing sophistication of the theory and practice of a movement with very deep roots. Today this legacy can be witnessed in the riots in Ferguson sparked by the police murder of Michael Brown to the outright uprising in Baltimore, MD as a response to the police murder of Freddy Grey, which, like in Ferguson and elsewhere, just happened to be the tipping point in a city whose African American communities have been suffering under more than forty years of savage poverty, and the centuries old racist scapegoating and violence of a crisis-ridden capitalist system.

The Marxist history of education we have constructed views the global proletarian class camp, including labor movements, the colonial resistances of Indigenous nations, the Civil Rights Movement that developed into a more militant and revolutionary Black Panther Party for Self Defense, the teacher and professor movement against high stakes testing, privatization, and school closures, etc. as past and present influences—even if none of our influences are without at least some critique. What all of these movements teach us is that material conditions and the dominant discourses that justify and mystify them should never be accepted or internalized passively. These conditions and discourses need to be critically analyzed. The traditional narrative regarding the emergence of common schools, for example, falsely portrays their emergence as stemming from the needs and desires of the American people, rather than a system that seems to have been imposed on labor to serve the needs and interests of capital, as argued throughout this essay.

Offering an example of the traditional narrative of the common school era Cubberley (1919) argues that its

emergence in the 1840s, beginning in New England, represents a move toward secularization, which was a response to the country's "shifting needs" from "religious" to "industrial and civic and national needs" (p. 172). For Cubberley, then, common schooling was not a response to the changing needs of the elite, but reflected the needs and desires of the majority of the population. In the dominant discourse the people are never described as the working class, and therefore not directly connected to the capitalist class in a production relation, whose productive capacity, beyond what is socially necessary for survival, is appropriated by the capitalist for the self-expansion of capital. Horace Mann, in fact, viewed this kind of class analysis that connects the wealth of the capitalist to the unpaid labor hours of workers, as dangerous and the product of uncivilized *revolutionizers* who do not posses the proper moral, religious foundation.

This process, whose internal drive is for perpetually expanding surplus value and therefore tends toward the immiseration of labor, is fundamentally alienating (i.e. separating the individual from her or his very humanity), which led Bowles and Gintis (1976) to conclude that industrialists came to understand that to prevent working class resistance, workers require ideological management. Horace Mann was fearful of the power of organized labor (remember, labor had a long history of having the ability to demand high wages because of the availability of cheap land). Mann therefore believed that society's salvation rested on taming the laboring masses to ensure they do not destroy God's society through strikes and other labor actions Mann considered to be crimes (Cremin, 1957). Through his work crusading for common schooling Mann developed a series of additional arguments for why common schooling should be supported, which he seemed to employ depending upon who his audience was.

For industrial capitalists, Mann had two primary lines of reasoning. First, an educated worker, it was argued, is more passive and controllable because he will have grown up with the children of the bosses and more successfully indoctrinated with the idea that capitalism is inevitable and the capitalists are wise and just and thus the saviors of the peasants of feudalism, and the peoples of every other primitive society in the world (i.e. the world). More fully expanding on this logic

Bowles and Gintis (1976) offer an important analysis noting that:

> Inequality was increasingly difficult to justify and was less readily accepted. The simple legitimizing ideologies of the earlier periods—the divine origin of social rank, for example—had fallen under the capitalist attack on royalty, and the traditional landed interests. The broadening of the electorate and of political participation generally—first sought by the propertied and commercial classes in their struggle against the British Crown—threatened soon to become a powerful instrument in the hands of the farmers and workers…The process of capitalist accumulation drastically changed the structure of society: The role of the family in production was greatly reduced; its role in reproduction was increasingly out of touch with economic reality. A permanent proletariat and an impoverished and, for the most part, ethnically distinct, reserve army of unemployed had been created…With increasing urgency, economic leaders sought a mechanism to insure political stability and the continued profitability of their enterprises. (p. 159)

Clearly, Bowles and Gintis (1976) offer a sophisticated framework to understand the emergence of common schooling. After all, the transition from feudalism and the old apprentice system that ties many individual families to specific types of labor activity to capitalism and the rapid spread of a generalized market in labor was not just an economic transformation, but impacted the entire social universe including the family structure, the legal system, the holdings of land, and so on. Given such monumental revolutionary changes, it is not surprising that the conscious molding of the public mind through education would come to play such a central role in these processes.

The other argument Mann had for capitalists appealed to the religious background of most, if not all, of Americas' New England capitalists. That is, he talked a lot about capitalists as stewards of the Earth, who should give back a little in the form of taxes to fund common schools, an act God would certainly smile upon. They would also secure a positive legacy for themselves among mortals. This argument tends to be the one reproduced in history of education books

conveniently forgetting to mention its connection to social control to subvert working class resistance against the destructive process of the self-expansion of capital. For example, Gerald Gutek (1970), in his book, *An Historical Introduction to American Education*, creates a narrative that matches Katz' (1987) description of the narratives created by traditional historians to counter the new research produced in the 1960s by critical education historians:

> In framing his appeal for a tax-supported system of common schools, Mann developed a theory of humane and responsible capitalism which greatly resembled the stewardship concept contained in the Protestant ethic…Mann saw the abuses in the ruthless capitalism of the nineteenth century, he believed in working with the system rather than against it. (p. 56)

Where Cubberley (1919) fails to mention the working class, the capitalist class, or even capitalism, Gutek (1970) recasts capitalism from an inherently oppressive social relation to a reformed and socially responsible harmonious utopia. Before the criticalists shifted the paradigm, education historians, such as Cubberley (1919), were able to construct a purely ideological fantasy world characterized by vast omissions. For example, Cubberley (1919) identifies the movement for common schooling as a response to Americans' push for "secularization," but offers no evidence that Americans were becoming less religious. Cubberley attempts to argue that Mann's response to Americans' demand for secularization was a nondenominational form of common schooling. Since Bowles and Gintis (1976), however, it has become clear that the push for nondenominational approaches to common schooling reflected a desire to attract all segments of U.S.-born and immigrant American workers to attend schools because issues of social control and worker militancy were escalating striking fear in the hearts of the industrial capitalist class. This, then, is the third argument Mann used, that is, his argument to convince workers to attend his schools, especially Irish Catholics who were naturally suspicious of Mann because of his Protestant, colonizing background. It is also apparent in the above excerpt that Bowles and Gintis (1976), following Marx, hone in on the transition from feudalism to capitalism as an important period rendering the process of formal

schooling increasingly important. Speaking more directly to this issue Bowles and Gintis (1976) argue:

> In the United States, unlike Europe, market and property institutions were developed and strengthened quite rapidly. For preindustrial America already possessed essential elements of a capitalist class structure. United States capitalism sprang from a colonial social structure closely tailored to the needs of British mercantile society. Whereas, in Europe, the transformation of property relations in land from a system of traditional serfdom and feudal obligation to the capitalist form of private ownership required half a millennium of conflict and piecemeal change, in the United States, private property was firmly established from the outset. Only in seventeenth-century New England did land-use patterns approximate communal property relations of an earlier European era. In areas held by Native Americans, communal property relations also predominated… However, the emergence of a developed market in labor, perhaps the most critical aspect of capitalist growth, involved at least two centuries of protracted and often bitter struggle. (p. 58)

It is interesting that Bowles and Gintis (1976) do not make the connection between establishing a market in labor and the inter-related, yet separated, processes of the westward expansion of the primitive accumulation of Native American land, and then the process of blocking working class direct access to its natural material wealth to which human labor is added in hopes of increasing its use value. The difficulty of this process, as discussed by Marx above, contributed to both the growth of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the elite insight that labor will not voluntarily appropriate themselves from the earth and their own humanity. In light of these comments, we can conclude that education, as well as laws and practices such as artificially inflating the price of land to prevent working-class access, assisted in the establishment of a stable market in labor.

Conclusion: Looking at the Global Class War

The competitive drive among capitalists for progressively greater and cheaper sources of labor power, raw materials,

and new markets led to a series of stages or eras identified by V.I. Lenin in his globally influential pamphlet, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and recently updated in a book by the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) (2015), *Imperialism in the Twenty First Century: Updating Lenin's Theory a Century Later*. Summarizing this movement of capital Lenin argued that during Marx's time capitalists competed amongst themselves nationally in leading capitalist nations, the U.S., England, France, and Germany in particular, which led to national monopolies.

The General Law of Accumulation identified by Marx (1867/1967) then led capitalist nations to face each other in competition over the dividing up of Africa and East Asia in particular. The imperialist nations, argued Lenin, underwent significant shifts such as exporting capital rather than products of labor, which was made possible by the merging of bank capital with industrial capital giving way to financial capital, which occurred during capital's earlier monopoly phase of development. Imperialist capital was becoming a more globalized and dominating force (PSL, 2015).

Lenin emphasized how such imperialist tendencies emerged within competing capitalist nations not as the product of particular policy choices, but as a result of the internal laws of capitalist accumulation that Marx (1867/1967) repeatedly pointed out acted upon individual capitalists as an external coercive force (PSL, 2015). In fact, in every stage of the development of capital the laws of accumulation compel capitalists to act in particular kinds of savage ways or be driven out of business by their competitors. This tendency remains true today. In other words, U.S. imperialism is not the product of a group of evil Republicans and corrupted Democrats who have subverted the "democratic" process, but rather reflect the current stage in the historical development of capital, which can only be temporarily slowed down, it cannot be reformed out of capital. Only a worldwide working class revolution can transcend imperialist capitalism. Our Marxist historiography must be employed in the service of this anti-capitalist movement. Central to imperialism is settler-state colonialism. The sovereignty and self-determination of colonized Indigenous and oppressed nations must therefore be a central focus of a communist pedagogy and Marxist history of education.

Once the world was divided up into colonies controlled by the Imperialist nations, the only path to the ongoing expansion required by capital's laws of accumulation, beyond revolutions in production, was for nations to encroach on each others colonial territories, which Lenin correctly predicted would lead to the World Wars. After World War II the Soviet Union emerged stronger than ever giving way to a global working class socialist camp with Soviet supported socialist countries all over the world. The so-called Cold War consisted of the U.S. and its supporting countries waging a global class war on the socialist bloc. Once the Soviet Union fell, the U.S. emerged as the world's single capitalist super power targeting independent peripheral capitalist nations able to survive under the protection of the socialist bloc. Again, today's communist global movement must target U.S. imperialism.

This is the current task of a Marxist historiography in the history of education. That is, the challenge is to uncover the ways today's education policies in the U.S. and around the world are an expression of the capitalist class' perpetual war waged on the working class and colonized peoples. This Marxist history of education must advance the rigorous and militant proletarian model of revolution identified by Marx (1852/1972). In other words, a Marxist historiography must be based on Marx and Engels' (1846/1996) premises of history with an eye toward subverting the process of capital's self-expansion for communist and sovereign alternatives (i.e. a pedagogy of becoming). This means to cease to exist as alienated labor and to cease to exist as colonized subjects. This might simultaneously mean recovering what has been lost and creating something that never has been.

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